# SAN MARCOS FREE PRESS.

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SAN MARCOS, - - TEXAS


## TEXAS TOPICS.

—Corn is in the silk and cotton is in bloom, in Larado.

—It is estimated that 250,000 bushels of wheat will be raised in Comanche county this year.

—A syndicate has been formed to buy 7,000,000 acres of Texas Panhandle lands.

—Texas used to feed her pecans to the hogs. Now she sells the crop for $2,000,000. The nut is good for torpid livers.

—The Texas-Mexican shops located at "Corpus" are in full blast and contain modern and the most improved machinery.

—The Luling Manufacturing Company filed a charter in Austin April 26th, with capital stock of $100,000. They will make cotton, woollen goods and thread.

—The senate passed a bill validating the debt of $134,475.26 owed by the State to the university fund, and providing for the payment of $104,215.78 interest on the same.

—Santa Fe county voted $150,000 in county bonds to aid in the construction of the Texas, Santa Fe & Northern railroads, from southern Utah via Santa Fe to Galveston. The work will begin at once.

—The farmers in the neighborhood of Crawford are greatly excited over the discovery of a strange worm which they have named the grain worm. It is doing much damage to the wheat and other grain crops, and the farmers say that if something is not discovered to stay its ravages not more than one-third crop will be made.

—An alarming mortality is reported among cattle in Kendall county. The animals afflicted do not linger or feel sick, but die suddenly, apparently without any disease. It is thought by some that the trouble arises from over feeding of cotton seed, the quantity of cotton remaining on the seeds accumulates in a solid cake in the stomach and causes inflammation which proves fatal

—Denison *Herald-News:* Mr. T. V. Munson has just returned from an extended tour through Southeastern Texas, as far west as Austin to gather information in regard to the forestry of the State. He has been appointed by the American Forestry Association of Cincinnati to prepare and read a paper on Texas forestry at their congress, to be held at Cincinnati from 25th to 29th instant, and is now busily engaged compiling it.

—Comptoller Brown says, in his judgment, the advalorem tax can be reduced to 30 cents on $100, and occupation taxes, except liquor dealers' license, and other occupations taxed for police regulation abolished, without incurring any deficiency during a period of one year. The estimate on basis of the reduction for one year is, advalorem 30 cents, $1,049,558; polls, $287,723; retail liquor dealers, $300,000; quart dealers, $63 595, five-gallon dealers, $10,300; beer sellers, $9,600; special occupations, $8,340; taxes on lands paid at the comptroller's office and redemptions $41,514; office fees $160,219; total, $1,876,882. Deduct $289,319 for cost of assessing and collecting, delinquents and insolvents, leaving net revenue $1,587,563, one-fourth of which belongs to the public schools. This leaves $1,190,672 for the support of the government, being $54,672 in excess of of expenses for one year.

### A New Line to Texas and Arkansas.

A project is on foot, and may be said to be consummated, that will, if legitimate results are reached, greatly cripple, if not wholly checkmate, the great Gould's operations in the field to which he has of late been turning a great deal of his attention. The information is from authentic sources, and may be classed as a semi-official announcement. The Texas and St. Louis railway, popularly known as the Paramore Narrow-Gauge, has made a traffic contract with the Illinois Central Railway Company and the Alton and Terre Haute, commonly called the Cairo Short line, whereby said companies agree to form a through line from St. Louis and Chicago to points in Texas and Arkansas. This agreement was ratified at the meeting of the Alton and Terre Haute company last Thursday, and will also be ratified by the Texas and St. Louis company at the meeting next Wednesday. By this agreement each company binds itself to put on 600 cars, with adjustible trucks, which it is thought will accommodate the business to be done. The contract takes effect the 1st of June, and continues for 50 years. This is a matter of vital importance to the two cities named, and to the two States of Arkansas and Texas, as it affords a direct independent line outside the Gould combinations, and one that will remain outside. The present terminus of the Texas and St. Louis is at Bird's Point, on the Mississippi, opposite Cairo. By this arrangement the trains are brought into the St. Louis Union Depot, the change of truck being made at Cairo. The Texas and St. Louis will in sixty days be completed to Clarendon, Ark., opening up 200 miles ready for traffic, and as soon as bridges across the Arkansas, White and Red Rivers, now building, are finished there will be through trains to Gainesville, Waco and Houston, in Texas, with branches to Helena and Little Rock. This alliance contemplates the rapid construction of the Texas and St. Louis to the Rio Grande and to all important points in Arkansas. The rolling stock is now in course of construction, and through sleepers will run from Chicago and St. Louis into Texas and Arkansas if the sleepers are finished in time.—*St. Louis Dispatch.*

### The National Bank Charters.

Under the National banking act a charter lives only twenty years. That was the life as the old United States bank law. Our first national banks were chartered in 1863, and right along every year since, until now there are about two thousand of them. Those chartered in 1863 will be compelled to wind up their business next year unless congress passes a new act or amends the one so as to extend the time of expiration.

The subject is now before congress, and it is evedent that the banks have not as many friends as they had nineteen years ago. A motion was made the other day in the House, to suspend the rule and take up the national bank bill out of its regular order. It required a two-thirds vote, and failing to receive that, the motion was lost. This shows at least two things: First, that a large number of congressmen don't regard the consideration of th banking bill of more importance than some other matters that are now before the national legislature; and second, that it is intended to discuss this measure thoroughly before it is acted upon finally.

We look upon both these phases as very favorable and healthy symptoms. It will give time to congress and also to the people to review the whole subject and consider it in all its bearings.

Banking in itself, is a proper, legitimate and useful branch of business. It grew out of the necessities of commerce, and its beginning dates far back in the past. The Athenian banker was an important personage Money changers were before the Christian era. They were the original bankers. They supplied traders and travelers with coin for convenience in dealing with different tribes and nations. They gradually became useful agencies in affairs of states; and two centuries before Christ state banks were known. The lending of money for usury is of very ancient origin. Banks of issue and circulation were established later. Of this latter class the Bank of Venice, founded in 1171, was the first in Europe. It continued in existence about six hundred years. Its circulation was based on deposits of funds which could not be withdrawn, which fact gave its currency a value steady and permanent. The Bank of Venice was destroyed when the Venetian government was overthrown by the French army in 1797. The Bank of Geneva followed in 1345; then came the Bank of Barcelona in 1401; the Bank of Amsterdam in 1609, and other nations followed from time to time. The Bank of England was founded in 1594; the Bank of France in 1716, and within the last one hundred years banks have become common among all nations.

It was their value as fiscal agencies of government that operated most powerfully in establishing our national banks. What gold and silver coin there was in the country was withdrawn from circulation; and with a great war on our hands, with nothing but our credit to use for purchasing and paying material, it was believed that a system of national banking which should aid in giving the people a currency that would always be of value equal to our government notes, would be a useful and economical establishment. These banks were creatures of the troublous times of war. That they served the purposes of their creation well, perhaps not many persons doubt. But war measures are not always equally good in peace. Now, that we are nearly twenty years away from the war, with our over flowing treasury, and a good procpect for the unbroken peace, it is well worthy consideration whether we cannot get along without the aid of these banks. Especially is this true when we reflect that the banks are becoming a source of danger as well as of support. Only two years ago some of them threatened conduct which would have given the people a great deal of trouble, had it been generally adopted. We don't need any of these destrutive agencies now. The people need and demand a safe, uniform, and convenient currency, and the time is at hand when we may wisely and safely determine whether the government cannot establish a currency based on the gold and silver of the people's pockets, and their mountains, without assistance from any power which may at any time swell into dangerous proportions.

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THE coffee plant has the general appearance of a cherry tree. It grows to a height of twenty or thirty feet, but in the course of culture is kept cut down to five or six feet.

A GENTLEMAN who took to medicine late in life said to a friend, "You know the old proverb—at 40 a man must be a fool or a physician?" "Yes," was the reply; "but, doctor don't you think he can be both?"

## GLIMPSES OF MOROCCO.

Extracts From a Review of a Tour in Morocco by Enmondo De Amicis.

Of course the domestic life of the Fez people was a sealed book to the Italian tourist, with the exception of such glimpses as he could obtain at formal receptions and the ceremonious breakfasts and dinners to which the embassy were invited. As regards the feminine moiety of the population, his observations were necessarily very limited. He saw some slave women, however, at the Grand Vizier's, and one day, having mounted to the flat roof of the building where he lodged, he described a Moorish beauty sunning herself on an adjoining terrace. The first experience is thus described:

While the Grand Vizier was talking, Mr. De Amicis, seated in the doorway, was looking *a la* Bunthrone out of the corners of his eyes at the slave women, who, little by little, and encouraged by his air of benign curiosity, had drawn near, unseen by the Vizier, so that they could almost touch him. There they stood, looking and being looked at with a certain complacency. There were eight of them, we are told, fine girls of from 15 to 20 years of age; some mulattoes, some black, with large eyes, dilated nostrils, and full bosoms, all dressed in white, with very broad embroidered girdles; arms and feet bare, bracelets on their wrists, great silver rings in their ears, thick silver anklets. Mr. De Amicis got an impression that these comely Moslems would not scruple very much to have their cheeks pinched by a christian hand. A member of the embassy pointed out to our traveler the beautiful foot of one of them; she noticed it, and began to examine her own foot with much curiosity. All the others did the same, comparing their own feet with hers. Then one of the visitors "fired off" his opera hat; they drew back, then smiled, and fluttered near again. Presently, however, the Vizier's voice, ordering the table to be prepared, sent them flying.

The terrace adventure of our inquisitive Italian is also worth recounting. One day the chief custodian of the palace assigned to the Italian Embassy gave him secretly the key of the terrace or flat roof, recommending him, however, to be prudent, because the terraces in Fez, as in other cities of Morocco, belong to the women, and are considered almost as appendages of the harem. Mr. De Amicis went up to the roof, which he found very spacious and completely surrounded by a parapet higher than a man, having a few loopholes for windows. Peering through these loop-holes, you seemed to see into another world. On the terraces far and near, were women, a greater part of whom, judged by their dress, were in easy circumstances—ladies, indeed, so far as the title is at all appropriate in Morocco. A few were seated upon the parapets, some walking about, some jumping with the agility of squirrels from one terrace to another, hiding, reappearing, and throwing water in each other's faces, laughing merrily. There were old women and young, little girls of eight or ten, all dressed in garments of the strangest cut and the most brilliant colors. Most of them had their hair falling over their shoulders, a red or green silk handkerchief tied round the head in a band, a sort of caftan of different hues with wide sleeves, bound round the waist with a blue or crimson sash, a velvet jacket open at the breast, wide trousers, yellow slippers, and large silver rings about the ankle. The slaves and children had nothing on but a chemise; only one of these ladies was near enough for Mr. De Amicis to see her features. She was a woman of about 30, dressed in gala attire, and standing on a terrace but a cat's jump below his own. She was looking down in to a garden, leaning her head upon her hand. "We looked at her," says our author, with a glass. Heavens, what a picture! Eyes darkened with antimony, cheeks painted red, throat painted white, nails stained with henna, but handsome despite her 30 years, with a full face and almond-shaped eyes, languid, and veiled by long lashes; the nose a little turned up; a small, round mouth, as the Moorish poet says, like a ring; and a sylph-like figure, whose soft and curving lines were revealed by the diaphanous texture of her dress." She seemed sad. Perhaps some fourth bride of 14 had lately entered the harem and stolen her husband's caresses. From time to time we are told, she glanced at her hand, her arm, a tress of hair that fell over her bosom, and sighed. The sound of our traveler's voice speaking to a companion suddenly roused her; she looked up, saw they were observing her, jumped over the parapet of the terrace with the agility of an acrobat, and varnished.

### Sun Storms and Auroras.

The great sun spot which was visible a few days ago without a telescope, and which there is strong reason to believe was connected with the splendid auroras and great magnetic disturbance of last week, is now nearing the western edge of the sun, where, through the effects of foreshortening, it is no longer visible without optical aid. In the telescope it is still a wonderful object.

Reports from observatories in various parts of the country show that it has been noticed and closely studied by the astronomers. On the 16th inst., when it was approaching the center of the disk, it exhibited the greatest disturbance. A portion of the sun's surface more than a thousand million square miles in extent was heaving and whirling and tossing under the tremendous forces at work. Chasms, some of which by measurement were several thousand miles across, yawned within this area, their jagged and shining edges and deep purple abysses showing splendidly even in small telescopes. Bright tongues projected from the sides over the central chasms, and in some places narrow bridges of snowy whiteness crossed them. These holes were of every conceivable size and shape, and around them all was a vast penumbral shade, resting like a veil upon the face of the sun, and indicating to the trained observer the limits and extent of the great depressed area in which the still deeper chasms were formed.

All the minor features of the great spot were continually changing. An hour's watching revealed changes which, though slight compared with the vast extent of the spot, appeared marvelous when a little figuring showed the rapidity of the motions that were taking place.

The evening of the 16th was clear, and the sun could be watched till it touched the horizon. The tremendous disturbances that had revealed themselves during the afternoon continued at sunset. The astronomers put up their telescopes to wait for the morning, when the study of the great spot could be renewed; but hardly had the twilight faded before in the north, in the direction of one of the earth's magnetic poles, a pale green light began to glow, and presently an arch was formed, and then the mysterious curtains of the aurora were silently swayed and shaken in the heavens.

At the same time the telegraph lines and the Atlantic cable were crippled, and the magnetic needle showed the greatest excitement. The effects of the great sun spot, or rather the effects of the forces which produced it, were being felt by the earth, and it was responding to the magnetic thrill communicated from the sun.

The great spot continued through the week to show signs of intense activity, and almost every night the auroral streamers were shaken in the north, although the first display of Sunday night was unequalled by any that followed. That the magnetic disturbance did not cease so long as the auroras lasted, those whose business suffered through delays in the telegraph know too well.

At first sight it seems a startling proposition to assert that the sun has it in its power thus to interfere with the workings of the Atlantic cable, and to interrupt to no slight extent the correspondence and business between two continents. Nothing that the ancient fable makers related of Phœbus and his car of day was more wonderful than this. It would be yet more startling, however, if those who believe that the tornadoes and other atmospheric, which have made this month of April remarkable in meteorological annals, and also due to the disturbances in the sun, could establish their theories as scientific facts.

The power of the sun is only just beginning to be appreciated, even by men of science, and it is impossible to predict where the study that is now being concentrated upon his subject will end. Science has to-day no more splendid and promising field open to it.—*New York Sun.*

### A Remarkable Experience.

A little over two years ago, an English sea-captain touched at one of the South Sea Islands, inhabited by cannibals. The natives came flocking to the ship, intent as usual on barter.

Among the others came a mother bringing her little daughter, Seada. You may imagine the captain's disgust when the cannibal mother offered to kill and cook her child for his dinner, if he would give her trinkets worth about eight dollars. The captain gave the mother the coveted treasure, but signified that he would take the girl alive. After the captain had kept her a year, he met in his voyages, Captain and Mrs. Means of Miledridge, Me., and to these good people he gave over his charge. Being in Milebridge last summer, (says a correspondent of the *Religious Herald*) I called with Rev. Mr. Walbridge to see Seada. I was surprised at her quiet manners, and with the shy way in which she managed to see everything going on while hanging her head from bashfulness. Her general appearance was that of a good looking mulatto, with straight black hair and handsome black eyes. Seada has already acquired the ways of an American child and is rapidly learning in the studies of the common schools. Her principal delight however seems to be in the Sunday-school. She needs no urging to attend Sabbath services, but is on the contrary, eager to attend. A while ago she heard a sermon on the Two Builders, and then she gave an intelligent account of part of it. What a contrast has been brought about in the life of this little girl! Two years ago she was a cannibal, living in the most loathesome degradation, and brought to be sacrificed by her own mother for eight dollars; to-day living in a civilized country, a useful member of a happy home.—*Anon.*

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"CANE bottomed chairs," repeated the countryman, studying the upholsterer's sign. "Cain bottomed chairs, did he? I want to know! Can't hardly believe it, but, then, these 'ere city chaps knows. Won't our domine be took back, though, when I tell 'em."—*Yonker's Gazette.*

### The Missouri Pacific Extension.

The track laying on this important railroad was finished to Taylor, in Williamson county, on Saturday, the 19th inst., and made a connection with the International & Great Northern railroad, the all-rail communication between St. Louis and Laredo, over the Missouri Pacific, Missouri, Kansas & Texas, and International & Great Northern railroads.

This is an important route in the Gould system of roads in the southwest, and another is the line between St. Louis and Laredo, over the St. Louis & Iron Mountain, Texas & Pacific, and the International & Great Northern railroads, via Texarkana and Longview.

At Laredo a large force is at work bridging the Rio Grande with iron cylinder piers and all iron truss bridges, and the grading under the contract with Joseph Sampsell is completed 36 miles towards the City of Mexico.

The track laying outfit of M. S. Coleman & Co. having laid the 500 miles between Ft. Worth and Blanco Junction on the Texas & Pacific, and the 75 miles between Waco and Taylor, on the Missouri Pacific, will now go to Laredo and lay the 700 miles between Laredo and the City of Mexico, on the Mexican, Oriental & Inter-Oceanic railroad.

In this contract they are joined by E. P. Cowen and Morgan Jones, who also unite with M. S. Coleman & Co. in laying the track on the Fort Worth and Denver City railroad.

Taylor, at the junction of the Missouri Pacific and the International & Great Northern railroads, is an important position and being surrounded by the most beautiful agricultural section of Texas, and well supplied with wood and water, is destined to grow rapidly into a large town.

The machine shops of the two railroads will be located at this point; also wheat elevator, cotton-seed oil mill, etc.

### American Postage Stamps.

The portrait of Benjamin Franklin on the one cent stamp, in imperial ultramarine blue, is after a profile bust of Rubricht. The head of Andrew Jackson on the two-cent stamp, in vermilion, is from a bust by Hiram Powers. The Washington head on the green three-cent stamp is after Houdon's celebrated bust. The head on the five-cent blue stamp is that of Zachary Taylor. The Lincoln profile, in red, on the six cent stamp, is after a bust by Volk. The seven-cent in vermilion, gives the head of Stanton after a photograph. The head of Jefferson, on the ten-cent stamp in chocolate, is drawn from a life-sized statue by Hiram powers. The portrait of Henry Clay, in neutral purple, on the twelve-cent stamp, is after a bust by Hart. The head of Webster on the fifteen-cent stamp, in orange, is after the Clevinger bust. The portrait of Gen. Scott on the twenty four-cent stamp, in purple is after a bust by Coffee. The head of Hamilton on the thirty-cent stamp in black, is after the Cerrachi bust; and the portrait of Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, in carmine, on the ninety-cent stamp, is after Wolcott's statue. The style in which these adhesive stamps are printed, and the clearness of outline of the several portraits, as well as the artistic excellence of the engraving, reflect credit on the head of the Postoffice Department, Mr. Creswell, under whose authority they were executed. The seven, twelve and twenty-four-cent stamps have been retired from use. The new five-cent stamp will be a portrait of Garfield, from the photograph of which the Queen had a copy, and which was approved by Mrs. Garfield.—*Boston Transcript.*

### Postal Cards.

A treatise on the history of the postal card has been published in Berlin. The originator of the idea is said to have been a German State official, Dr. Stephen, who wrote an essay upon it in 1865. Austria was the first to adopt it, beginning in October, 1869. The first three months witnessed the passage of 2,830,000 cards through the mails. Germany followed suit in 1870, and on the first day after the introduction of the postal card 45,468 were sent off in Berlin alone; and within two months over 2,000,000 were used. Other countries soon initiated the same step. During the Franco-Prussian war the postal card system was a great boom to both armies. Over 10,000,000 cards passed through the campaign between the German soldiers and their friends and homes. The greatest proportional consumption of postal cards occur unquestionably in the United States. The whole of Europe is estimated to use annually 350,000,000 while the consumption in the United States alone will probably not fall short of 230,000,000. Germany consumed in 1879, 125,747,000. The use of the postal card is, moreover, constantly increasing, and, to some extent, at the expense of the letter correspondence. There are now said to be seventy-three countries in which it is introduced. Austria, which has the honor of first putting the idea into practical execution, is now said to have cards of the poorest material and most inconvenient form.

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A CAPITAL story is quoted by Southerland Edwards, in his pleasant book on the opera, of a young lady, who, buying a piece of music, was asked whether the fact of it being "in four flats" would be any obstacle to her playing it. She replied that it made no difference how many flats were marked, as beyond two she scratched them out with a penknife.